

Deon Nielsen Price

In 1953, I enrolled in the Hymnology and Baton Technique class. As a nervous novice, my conducting examination was weak. I was counseled, "Deon, you are a wonderful piano accompanist but you will never be a conductor!"

The next morning I was surprised to receive a call from the Branch President to be the BYU Branch Chorister. After a restless night, I decided to take the challenge. I spent 2 hours every day in front of the mirror applying the skills I had been introduced to in the class; memorized all the hymns, prepared and timed the Sunday School Song Practice; met with the organist before and after each Sunday meeting. Being prepared and confident, I stood on the stage at the Joseph Smith Building each Sunday to conduct the congregation of 2000. None of them knew that sweat was running from my head down my back and legs!

Subsequently I conducted LDS choirs in Michigan, Kansas, Germany, and California, including conducting the Santa Monica Community Messiah Sing-Ins, as well as choirs of 250, 500, and 1000 voices for the LDS Multi Regional Conferences at the Los Angeles Sports Arena, Shrine Auditorium, and Rose Bowl in the 1970's and 1980s.